

What we claim is:

*Sub a'*  
1. A non-emulsion topical gel composition comprising an aliphatic polyhydric alcohol, an alkali salt of a fatty acid ester, a carbohydrate-based or sterol-based surfactant/emulsifier or combination thereof, water, and substantially no oil.

2. The composition of claim 1 in which the salt is a sodium, potassium or amine salt of a C12-C22 fatty acid.

3. The composition of claim 2 in which the fatty acid is behenic acid.

*Sub a'*  
4. The composition of claim 1 in which the surfactant/emulsifier is carbohydrate-based.

5. The composition of claim 4 in which the surfactant/emulsifier is sucrose- or glucose-based.

6. The composition of claim 4 in which the surfactant/emulsifier is selected from the group consisting of PPG-20 methyl glucose ether, PPG-20 methyl glucose distearate, methyl gluceth 10, methyl gluceth 20, glyceryl monostearate, sucrose distearate, or PEG 120 methyl glucose dioleate, in place of PPG-20 methyl glucose ether.

*Sub B2*  
7. The composition of claim 1 in which the surfactant/emulsifier is sterol-based.

8. The composition of claim 7 in which the surfactant/emulsifier is cholesterol or a phytosterol.

*Sub a2*  
9. The composition of claim 1 which contains at least one pigment.

10. The composition of claim 9 in which the pigment is selected from the group consisting of iron oxides (yellow, red, brown or black), ferric ammonium ferrocyanide (blue), manganese violet, ultramarine blue, chrome oxide (green), talc, zeolite, kaolin, titanium dioxide (white), zinc oxide, and mixtures thereof.

11. The composition of claim 9 in which the pigment is a water-dispersible pigment.

12. The composition of claim 11 in which the pigment is coated with dimethicone copolyol.

13. The composition of claim 1 in which the polyhydric alcohol comprises isoprene glycol.

14. The composition of claim 1 which is a color cosmetic.

15. A non-emulsion, topical gel composition comprising  
(a) from about 10 to about 40% of an aliphatic polyhydric alcohol;  
(b) from about 1 to about 15% of an amine or alkali metal salt of a fatty acid;  
(c) from about 1 to about 10% of a sterol- or carbohydrate-based surfactant/emulsifier.  
(d) from about 20 to about 60% of water,  
the composition containing substantially no oil.

sub  
a3

16. The composition of claim 15 comprising  
(a) from about 10 to about 25% of an aliphatic polyhydric alcohol;  
(b) from about 1 to about 6% of an amine or alkali metal salt of a fatty acid;  
(c) from about 2 to about 6% of a sterol- or

carbohydrate-based surfactant

(d) from about 20 to about 60% of water,  
the composition containing substantially no oil.

17. The composition of claim 15 in which the salt is a sodium, potassium or amine salt of a C12-C22 fatty acid.

18. The composition of claim 15 which comprises an alkali metal salt of behenic acid.

19. The composition of claim 15 in which the polyhydric alcohol comprises isoprene glycol.

20. The composition of claim 15 in which the surfactant/emulsifier is sucrose or glucose-based.

21. The composition of claim 15 in which the surfactant/emulsifier is cholesterol or a phytosterol.

22. The composition of claim 15 in which the surfactant/emulsifier is selected from the group consisting of PPG-20 methyl glucose ether, PPG-20 methyl glucose distearate, methyl gluceth 10, methyl gluceth 20, glyceryl monostearate, sucrose distearate, or PEG 120 methyl glucose dioleate.

23. The composition of claim 15 which comprises at least one pigment.

24. The composition of claim 15, which comprises isoprene glycol, sodium behenate, a carbohydrate-based surfactant, and water.

25. The composition of claim 23 in which the pigment is a water-dispersible metal oxide.

26. The composition of claim 25 in which the pigment is coated with dimethicone copolyol.

26. The composition of claim 25 in which the pigment is coated with dimethicone copolyol.